



SENATOR RUNNER'S WEEK IN REVIEW

A WEEKLY REVIEW THAT WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED AND UP-TO-DATE



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Legislature's Wrong Priorities:

Passes Bill to Give Illegal Immigrants Financial Aid to College and Kills a Bill to Stop Rewarding Teachers Arrested for Drugs

The legislative majority continues to support, encourage and ultimately reward illegal activity. This is wrong and I will continue to advocate on behalf of law-abiding citizens and the taxpayers of California.

Here are two examples that clearly demonstrate that the majority of the Legislature support and reward illegal actions at the expense of taxpayers.

Giving Illegal Immigrants Financial Aid for College

You may initially believe that this proposal is a joke. You may think no rational person could possibly support such a policy, but, unfortunately, 69 legislators voted to enact such a policy in the State of California last week.

This legislation, Senate Bill 160, would allow illegal immigrants to receive financial aid and Cal Grants in order to attend either the University of California (UC) or the California State University (CSU). In addition, it would require community colleges to waive fees for illegal immigrants that qualify to receive such aid.

Financial aid is not overabundant yet this measure would force California citizens to compete with illegal immigrants for financial aid to attend college. Taxpayers should expect to pay millions of dollars more annually, growing over time into the low tens of millions as the number of eligible illegal immigrants increase and the maximum Cal Grant award rises.

Governor Gray Davis already signed legislation allowing illegal immigrants to attend college and only pay in-state tuition – a benefit many US citizens do not have. SB 160, however, goes one step further and allows illegal immigrants to attend college for free – paid for by California taxpayers.

If you wonder why the Legislature cannot balance its budget, look at its priorities. We cannot allow tax dollars to be spent in such a destructive manner. The state should be focused on enforcing our

News of the Week

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[Runners' Bill Signed or Waiting Signature](#)

[Community College Bills Move Ahead](#)

[Emissions Cap May Put Lid on Plants](#)

[Governor Announces He Will Veto Government-Mandated Health Care Bill](#)

[Gas Prices Could Keep Falling](#)

[Governor Signs Posting Sex Offender Information Bills](#)

laws not rewarding people who continue to violate our laws and live here illegally.

I am writing a letter to the Governor to urge his veto of such a bill that completely ignores the law and actually rewards lawbreakers. I would encourage you to urge a veto as well. To email Governor Schwarzenegger, go to <http://www.govmail.ca.gov> or to write a letter to the Governor, you can send it to:

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: 916-445-4633

Rewarding Teachers and School Employees Arrested for Drugs

While 69 legislators voted to support allowing illegal immigrants to attend college for free at taxpayer expense, the State Assembly killed a measure that would stop rewarding teachers and school employees who are arrested for drugs. Current law requires school districts to give teachers and school employees **arrested** for illegal drugs up to a three-year fully paid vacation with benefits while they go through drug diversion.

This legislation would have provided necessary protection for school districts, and prevented drug offenders from taking advantage of loopholes in the law. Courts are forcing school districts to pay up to hundreds of thousands of dollars to these offenders. Allowing this loophole to remain also violates the spirit of state education law, which protects students from school employees that use drugs. If anything, allowing them to collect back-pay rewards their behavior.

A battle waged until late into the night on whether schools should use their precious resources to continue to pay thousands of dollars in back-pay and benefits for school employees that have pled guilty for illegal drugs instead of keeping that money in the classrooms. At one point in the marathon legislative session, it received as many as 39 votes, but the special interests worked overtime to kill the measure. Ultimately, they succeeded and the measure died on a 38-32 vote.

The legislation was sponsored by Palmdale School District. The district has been forced to pay school employees who were arrested and pled guilty for illegal drugs their back-pay and benefits for a minimum of 18 months to 3 years plus hire a substitute teacher.

Roger Gallizzi, Palmdale School District's interim superintendent stated in the *Antelope Valley Press*, "It's less money for kids and more money for drug users. We're obviously very disappointed and amazed that big (California Teachers Association) would fight a bill that ultimately impacts classrooms."

Also opposing the bill was the California Federation of Teachers, California School Employees Association, Service Employees International Union, and the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees.

Gallizzi added in the same article, "Remember, these are not people who voluntarily came forward and said they needed to go into detox. They were using drugs the whole time they were dealing with children and they got caught."

The special interests worked hard to kill this rational bill and were ultimately successful – adding yet another example where the majority of the Legislature rewards illegal behavior at the expense

of taxpayers.

These two decisions by the Legislature clearly demonstrate the majority's priorities. I will continue to be a fierce advocate for taxpayers and fight to turn around these priorities so our laws benefit law-abiding citizens.

**If you would like to contact Senator Runner, please click
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OFFICES

Capitol

State Capitol, Room 4066
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916-651-4017
Fax: 916-445-4662

Antelope Valley

848 W. Lancaster Blvd, Ste 101
Lancaster, CA 93534
Phone: 661-729-6232
Fax: 661-729-1683

Victorville

Victorville City Hall
14343 Civic Drive, First Floor
Victorville, CA 92392
Phone: 760-843-8414
Fax: 760-843-8348

Santa Clarita – San Fernando Valley – Ventura County

Santa Clarita City Hall
23920 Valencia Blvd., Suite 250
Santa Clarita, CA 91355
Phone: 661-286-1471 Santa
Clarita Valley
Phone: 661-286-1472 San
Fernando Valley & Ventura County
Fax: 661-286-2543